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county and among the first to fall into decline and extinction in the days following the sugar boom. The remaining buildings of the Order are now used for quite a different purpose, which will be discussed later.

The first half of the eighteenth century saw the final flourishing of Vila Recôncavo and the beginning of its fall into obscurity. By 1700 the town was a thriving urban center--the newly created seat of local government, a military post, a highly active religious center, and the scene of the local courts of justice. In addition to large public buildings, imposing private residences dotted the streets, for many of the plantation owners constructed large houses in the town, which they used as stopping places in their journeys to and from their plantations and Salvador. Then as now, however, Vila Recôncavo was not the main center of attraction for the planters and their families, most of whom had houses in the capital where they spent the rainy seasons. Nevertheless, the presence of their large and ornate town houses gave a certain air of distinction and prosperity to the town.

The story of the decline of the town of Vila Recôncavo is symptomatic of what happened to many other towns in the region at a later date. Vilhena connects the decadence of Vila Recôncavo with the creation of the administrative center of Centro in 1727.[7] Until that time Centro had been a sítio (terminal designation for a small town), created in 1608. Toward the end of the seventeenth century the best lands of the Recôncavo, situated in what is now the county of Purificação, came into use as a result of the cessation of Indian attacks and of improvement in the machinery used in the plantations. Sugar mills powered by water no longer held as great an advantage as they had previously; over a hundred years of sugar-cane operation had pretty well stripped the littoral of the firewood necessary for continued high production; and by this time the coastal regions no longer held room for expansion. As the colonists pushed farther inland from Centro they found an abundance of the rich massapê lands and sufficient firewood for the needs of many plantations, and soon the number of inland sugar mills surpassed that of the coast.

7. Luis dos Santos Vilhena, Noticias soteropolitanas e brasilicas, 1802, ed. Braz do Amaral (Salvador, 1922), p. 502.

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5. Town Life

THE OCCUPATIONS of the townspeople in Vila Recôncavo differ considerably from the pursuits of the people in the rural zone. The town residents are engaged in gaining a living from a number of small enterprises; the economy is a money economy, and not one dominated by mutual obligations and rights, as it is to a certain degree on the plantations. Vila Recôncavo is the county seat and lacks any organized commerce or industry. It can be called an administrative town, inasmuch as government employment is the life of many of the people, especially the town's upper class.

The economic occupations of the townspeople can be divided into four groups: (1) the bureaucrats and merchants; (2) the group which serves them, such as cooks and laundresses; (3) a middle group of artisans whose greatest asset, as well as liability, is their independence; (4) a small group of people who do not fit into any of the three groups above.

According to the census which was taken in June, 1950, the labor force of the town numbered 459 persons, including men and women. Of the 459, eleven listed themselves as unemployed. The remainder of the population were listed as housewives, students, small children, and old people who were retired or incapacitated. In this category, which numbers about one thousand people, there are individuals who engage in part-time work, such as carrying water or firewood or doing piecework sewing--in other words, small occupations which in their eyes are not worthy of being classed as employment.

The occupations which were listed can be broken down into the four groups mentioned above as follows:

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Group 1 (bureaucrats and merchants)	Federal and state employees	54
	Municipal employees	16
	Merchants	12
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Group 2 (service occupations)	Laundresses	46
	Ironers	17
	Electricians	1
	General servants	29
	Seamstresses	8
	Embroiderers	1
	Store cashiers	10
	Canoeists	2
	Bakery workers	4
		118
Group 3 (artisans)	Farmers	24
	Fishermen	132
	Bricklayers	6
	Barbers	6
	Carpenters	4
	Tailors	3
	Peddlers	3
	Woodworkers	2
	Coopers	1
	Butchers	1
	Shoemakers	1
	Quitandeiras[1]	1
		184

Group 3 workers employ the following number of people, either as employees or as apprentices:

Bricklayers	17
Workers in roças	13
Fishermen	5
Tailors	4
Woodworkers	1
Carpenters	1

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1. Quitanda is an incipient store, usually run by a woman who sells vegetables and fruit from her windowsill.

2: Hutchinson E-4, 8 (1950-1951) 1967 8011 Bahia Brasilians 8011

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	Barbers	2
	Apprentice bricklayers	1
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Group 4 (miscellaneous)	Unemployed	11
	Factory workers	9
	Plantation workers	3
	Employees of Institute Vila Recôncavo (which will be described later)	8
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The federal and state employees in the town consist of the following people: 463 632

25 petroleum workers
9 teachers and maintenance workers from the nearby federal school
6 primary school teachers
3 tax collectors and secretary
1 federal statistics agent
1 postal and telegraph agent
1 mail carrier
2 secretaries of the Justice of the Peace
1 secretary of the civil register
1 police secretary
1 police lieutenant
2 policemen (this number changes occasionally)
1 malaria serviceman (called "José do DDT")

The Justice of the Peace, who is not listed above, does not live in the county but holds court in the courthouse once a week, or at other times if the occasion demands. His secretary, a local woman, does most of the work and has everything in readiness when he arrives. [693]

The twenty-five men listed as petroleum workers represent that industry's major contribution to the town. The oil workers receive relatively good wages, steady and sufficient for them to engage the services of at least one servant and a laundress. They may therefore be included in Group 1, even though they are not white-collar workers as are the others of the group. These men, rather than living in the petroleum workers' camp which is near the factory, have brought their fam- 463 [484]

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[484] ilies to live in Vila Recôncavo and travel to their work and back daily. During the summer this trip is made by truck, but in the winter it is made by foot or if possible by canoe. The petroleum industry has attracted few local people as yet. Instead, [521] strangers have come into the area as petroleum employees. A favorite conversation among fishermen is a discussion of whether they should give up fishing and go to work in the oil fields. The general feeling is that they are better off as fishermen. As they put it, if they fished for the same number of hours as the oil men work, they could earn more money than the petroleum workers. In their present occupation they can work as much or as little as they wish, the major determinant being whether there is enough in the house to eat and still a little left over for cigarettes, Coca-Colas, and occasional new clothes. They are an independent group, and are frequently criticized as being lazy because they will not take steady employment. This seems an unfair criticism in view of the rigors of fishing.

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[875] The others listed in the group of federal and state employees have permanent appointments to their jobs and in all but a few cases are local people. The federal tax collector and his wife, who is one of the schoolteachers, are strangers to [632] the area, but are now well integrated in the town. Three other schoolteachers are from other parts of the state and spend only the school year in Vila Recôncavo. There is a difference between the teachers who make Vila Recôncavo their home and those who do not. Those who spend only the school year there have little or no contact with the local population, apparently feeling that they are superior to anyone there. They are young women, but do not look for husbands among local men and openly admit they do not like the town. They are prominent in the group which calls the fishermen lazy and uncultured, and in general are unsympathetic to the town dwellers.

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632 There are sixteen municipal employees, all of them local people, consisting of the county secretary, the treasurer and his assistant, the contador who takes care of the county spending, the fiscal who is supposed to supervise the collecting of the county funds, three county tax collectors, and others who occupy minor posts such as courthouse porter. These positions are appointive, and as a result of the relative stability of the area's politics the appointees are seldom changed. The secretary is the man who does most of the county's adminis-

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trative work; he comes into office with a mayor and frequently remains through the terms of several other mayors. He therefore knows the duties well and can aid the mayor considerably. In addition, the secretary has a small store in town, capitalized at Cr$10.000,00, where drinks (rum and soft drinks), dried meat (charque), cigars, cigarettes, grass mats, condensed milk, wooden sandals, and a few other small items are sold. [443] [471]

The top municipal office is that of the mayor, which in Brazil is a county-wide office. The mayor is not on the above list as an employee, because he occupies another place in the census from which these data were taken. In Vila Recôncavo the mayor has come traditionally from the top social level, the rural landowning group. The office is elective, with a four-year term, except in the 1930's and 1940's, when the mayor was chosen by the appointed governor of the state (interventor). In Vila Recôncavo, as a general rule, the mayor has little or no interest in the town or, except in a few cases, in the office, which is considered a more-or-less onerous duty. He traditionally does not accept his salary. At the time of the last election there was consternation on the part of the planters, for no one wanted the office but clearly someone had to take it. When the choice was made, the candidate--one of the usina directors--was elected, for he had no opponent. The majority of the duties are left in the hands of the secretary, the mayor doing only a minimum of supervision and contributing little that is constructive. Generally any important matters are discussed at the home of the mayor, and his orders are conveyed to the secretary by messenger or telephone.

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The last mayor, Dr. Aliança, was an exception to the rule. He was interventor in 1947 and was elected mayor in 1948, serving until the general elections in the fall of 1950. He is a civil engineer and the owner of two large plantations, maintaining in perfect condition the old master's house of the former plantation in which he lives, as well as a large house in Salvador. While the roots of his family are in the Recôncavo, he himself came from the north and married into a plantation family of Vila Recôncavo. Although his family tradition has been that of sugar cane, he has not hesitated to break many of the traditional patterns of the area. One of his two plantations has been given over to experiments with other crops, such as bananas, rice, and manioc, on a relatively large scale, and also some production of milk and butter. A few

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632 years ago, after determining that these crops were not sufficiently rewarding, he made a large-scale planting of white
463 cacao. It is still too early to speak of the outcome of this ven-
[242] ture, for the trees have not yet started to give their first fruit, but this instance illustrates his usual energetic spirit.

Dr. Aliança took the office of mayor seriously and gave a
159 great deal of energy to it. His accomplishments were many
632 in the space of a few years: the paving of most of the town's
463 streets, the installation of electric lights on the streets, the formation of a company to sell electricity to those who wanted
653 it, the installation of telephone communications with the capital, and the construction of a new, modern primary school building. As a result of his personal energy and direction these works were completed, or at least nearly so, when he left the office. (According to law, the mayor cannot be re-elected). However, with the exception of building a bridge, nothing was done in the rural areas of the county. Traditionally any public works in the county are done in the county seat.

441 Many of the merchants in Group 1 are small operators.
463 The capitalization of the stores in Vila Recôncavo runs from
443 Cr$100.000,00 to as low as Cr$5.00,00. However, no matter how small the store, it provides a living for someone, or as
[471] they say in Vila Recôncavo, "Sempre da!" To the ordinary town citizen it is difficult to get enough capital together to open a store, but once opened it rarely closes for lack of business. Of the twelve stores in town, eight are owned and operated by men, and the other four belong to women. The best store in
441 town and the poorest one both belong to women. The "best"
444 store, Dona Carmen's, is the oldest, located on the main
[428] street leading from the boat dock. At present it is owned by Dona Carmen, who inherited it from her brother. It combines a general store and a bakery, and its prices are often slightly higher than those in other stores. It serves most of the people living in the older section of town. In addition to having the largest stock of ordinary foods, the store also carries finer packaged products such as wines, jellies, and preserves.

444 Bread is baked in the afternoon and delivered to the doors
256 of the customers' houses, still warm and with the delicious odor always associated with bread fresh from the oven. The bakery's customers for the most part have standing orders, receiving bread or rolls each day in time for supper. What is left over is hawked through the streets by the delivery boy,

2: Hutchinson E-4, 6 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

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were included in Group 4 because they worked for a nonprofit charitable institution.

Occupationally, the town dwellers differ sharply from the people of the rural area of the community. Their work rarely requires them to go out of town to the rural area. Of the entire working force of the town, only twelve men are employed in the sugar industry. Even during the harvest season, the town does not supply men to work in the cane fields or the factory. However, the few people in town who have mules occasionally rent them to planters during the harvest season to help carry the cane. The twenty-five petroleum workers have to leave town each day for work, but their work is also very different from that of any of the rural dwellers.

In the town, as on the plantations, there is specialization and division of labor. Among the fishermen, each man fishes constantly with one or two types of net. Change from one type of net to another is unusual and disliked. A fisherman seldom supplements his fishing by planting a garden. Instead, he depends upon his catch of fish to give him enough money to buy garden produce, as well as meat and manufactured articles. In his turn, the gardener never fishes, depending upon the returns from his garden to buy what he does not produce.

Daily routine for the fisherman varies considerably because it depends closely upon the tides, while the daily routine of merchants, teachers, and bureaucrats, as well as household servants and craftsmen, follows a more citylike pattern, beginning at about seven in the morning and ending late in the evening. There is also less seasonal variance in the work of the town dwellers, for it does not depend upon the planting and harvesting of crops as does that of the rural workers.

The town and plantation ways of life also vary considerably with respect to paternalism, which plays a much smaller part in the life of the town dweller. Most of the municipal bureaucrats have patrons among the rural landowners who have placed them in their bureaucratic positions. Bureaucrats, in turn, are to a smaller extent the patrons of people living in the town, particularly of their household servants. Although they have neither the financial resources nor the prestige to provide the security which a rural landowner can offer his people, they do what they can to help whenever asked. This help often takes the form of asking their own patrons for help

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
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herents of these cults, female slaves and former slaves for the most part, followed a lengthy routine to become practitioners in the various cult houses and spent large sums of money, according to legend, on the required bracelets, necklaces, and clothing.

Today, however, the cult priests and priestesses have the same complaint as the Catholic priests. They say that young people no longer have the understanding or the patience necessary to prepare for devotion in the cult houses. The older priestesses deplore the degeneration of some of these houses and the admission of Indian spirits, which are now displacing the African gods.

Spiritualism has recently entered the community. So far it has been limited to few people in the community, although it is very popular in Salvador.

The use of the supernatural as described in Willems' Cunha[1] does not take place in Vila Recôncavo. In Cunha the saints are asked to send rain whenever it appears that the crops are in danger. But in Vila Recôncavo, which lies in a semitropical rain area, there is no need for such invocations. Besides, these are large-scale economic crops, not subsistence produce on which the people depend directly for their living.

The Catholic Church in Vila Recôncavo

During the colonial period each religious parish was carefully delineated and conserved, but later political divisions cut across parish lines. This has made the use of colonial statistics very difficult. During colonial and empire times the church was the main census organ, but since parishes and counties do not coincide in their outlines the statistics are little help today in comparing the present with the past. Each parish built a mother church (matriz) in the parish town. Each of these churches had a patron saint, who was also the patron of the parish, and a resident priest or priests.

In the town of Vila Recôncavo, the county seat, a mother church was built, with São Gonçalo as its patron saint; also constructed was the Franciscan convent, connected with an opulent Third Order. As the Recôncavo entered its long per-

1. Emilio Willems, Cunha: Tradição e transição en uma cultura rural do Brasil (Sao Paulo, 1947), Chapter 7.

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58 begun to live together. But it is a general policy of Petrobrás that its employees establish regularized households and register their children, as the benefits of social legislation and insurance must be paid to legal beneficiaries, such as wives and children. Because of the many recent marriages, there are no longer any houses available in Vila Recôncavo, nor in Milagres, and there has been a spurt of housebuilding.

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178 There have also been some shifts in emphasis in the structure of the community. While the factory nucleus is no longer
621 the scene of social gathering for the upper class of the area,
*249 the structure of the factory-private plantation system ensures that it continues to be the economic center as long as sugar
[434] cane is being planted in the area. The system of quotas established for the private planter and the factory by the Institute of Sugar and Alcohol requires that planter and factory
[361] cooperate in supplying and receiving sugar cane. Also, the
[496] physical structure of the area, in which the factory is the center of the network of a small railroad which reaches out to each of the private properties, strengthens the impression of the factory as the center of activities.

178 The possible future shift from sugar to cacao will of course
443 diminish the importance of the sugar factory. However, in the meantime there is a new factor which will give more im-
[245] portance than ever to the factory: a feira, or market place.
*[249] The county of Vila Recôncavo does not have a weekly market. For many years the county officials have wanted to establish one, not only for increased municipal income, but also to help attract more people to the area and to make life easier for the population. A market place is now under construction at the factory nucleus. When the market is completed, the factory town will become at least a weekly center of attraction for many people of the surrounding plantations.

178 The development of the petroleum industry is bringing new
315 life to the town of Vila Recôncavo, to the nearby town of Mi-
[311] lagres, and to the new city of Conselho. Petrobrás cannot develop a nucleus on the land which belongs to the factory or to the private owners, and therefore it must concentrate any local community building efforts in the old public towns which
178 already exist. Petrobrás, indirectly, through the county court
315 of Vila Recôncavo, will soon contribute considerably to the
434 county income. The same sort of compensation which was
651 worked out in regard to the planters is now being arranged
652 for the county, through taxes on the finished products from
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the refinery, namely gasoline, kerosene, diesel oil, bottled gas, and other petroleum derivatives. As a result of the increased income, the county government will be able to build up the county seat considerably. A hospital is already being built, as well as a new dock for the boat which comes from the city.

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In Milagres, located in the neighboring county, there is already a considerable movement for breaking away from the parent county and becoming a separate municipio, a common pattern in Brazil for districts which reach a certain population and degree of economic activity. Thus there are two possibilities for urban growth in the area and for the formation of urban centers which will attract the large rural population. The town of Vila Recôncavo is close to realizing other possibilities. The construction of a road from the town to Centro has already begun, filling a long-felt need. Its completion will make it possible for cars, buses, and trucks to come from Feira, on the edge of the sertão, to Centro, down through Vila Recôncavo to Milagres, and on into the city, shortening the long trip by the existing road which follows the edges of the Recôncavo. Such traffic would "put Vila Recôncavo on the map," and would greatly increase its contacts with the outside world. In addition, the possibilities of the introduction of a new crop to the community will bring increased commercial activity and a much greater tax income, enabling the county to build its own roads and bridges and to make other improvements for the development of the area.

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Thus the community structure of Vila Recôncavo, which five years ago was in the process of crystallizing around the factory town, is now ripe for further change. The factory town continues for the present to be the major center, but the old county seat has all the possibilities of a rebirth of its former importance. In fact, because of the petroleum industry and the forthcoming changeover from sugar cane to cacao, the factory town is threatened as a community center, the position which it has only recently been consolidating.

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Finally, one of the most important changes in Vila Recôncavo in these five years is a change in attitude on the part of the people. Vila Recôncavo was always known as a conservative community, maintaining its old traditions and ways, rejecting innovations. However, there is now an air of expectancy and a search for new ways and new things. Dissatisfaction with the sugar industry, combined with the appearance

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